

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY



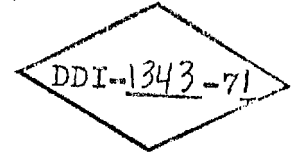
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37203

TELEPHONE 322-7311 AREA 615

Department of Political Science • Direct phone 322-2461

May 27, 1971

Mr. Richard M. Helms, Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C.



Dear Mr. Helms:

I write to inform you of a research project I have undertaken this summer described in the enclosed brief statement.

Would it be possible for you to grant me a personal interview to discuss this undertaking?

I hope you understand my motive to be that of serious research and not sensational disclosure. I would stress my primary concern at this time with the research feasibility of various listed topics rather than the substantive issues.

My present plans are to be in Washington on June 14 and 15 if you could see me then. If any other date would be more convenient I could probably arrange it.

Sincerely,

Harry Howe Ransom
Chairman

HHR:erm

enclosure

MORI/CDF

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY



NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37203

TELEPHONE 322-7311 AREA 615

Department of Political Science • Direct phone 322-2461

THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM-- SURVEY OF FRONTIERS FOR RESEARCH

June, 1971

With support from Russell Sage Foundation of New York I am undertaking a survey this summer of the "research frontiers" of questions relating to the intelligence systems and activities of the United States government.

My objectives are to draft a concise catalogue of questions on this topic needing scholarly investigation and to make a preliminary assessment and analysis of the research feasibility with regard to such topics.

In a recent book, The Intelligence Establishment (Harvard Press, 1970) I describe the vast intelligence bureaucracies that have evolved since 1947 and I identify some problems of purpose, policy, organization and control. A great amount of scholarly work remains to be done in this relatively unexplored frontier for social science research. Because of government security "classifications" the question of research feasibility is a serious one.

I am now making a survey of this research frontier. My objectives are (1) to develop an inventory of feasible topics for research, (2) to compile a list of individuals currently interested in this field of research (3) to outline a research agenda. I intend to prepare for publication a brief report on my survey.

Some of the topical questions to be explored are:

1. Is the concept of intelligence "community" a myth?
2. What is the effectiveness of policy controls within the system? (Executive, Legislative and Judicial)
3. What statutory and administrative authority exists for current assignments of intelligence roles and missions?

4. What is the interface of domestic counter-intelligence and positive (strategic) overseas intelligence functions?
5. What has been the impact of technology on basic intelligence functions?
6. What can be known about systems for data collection, categorization, storage, retrieval and about the compatibility among various information processing units within the system?
7. To what extent is sophisticated social science methodology now used in intelligence analysis and reporting?
8. What can be known about programs for recruiting, training and personnel development within the intelligence agencies?
9. Can criteria for efficiency and effectiveness of the system be developed?

Other topics are likely to be added to this list, which will be refined in the process of the survey.

With reference to these topics, I wish to inventory: (a) individuals knowledgeable or interested in further exploration of some of these topics (b) relevant published work, including unclassified public documents (c) research already in progress related to these topics.

Suggestions and comments would be most appreciated.

Harry Howe Ransom
Professor Harry Howe Ransom, Chairman
Department of Political Science
Vanderbilt University
Box 1817, Station B
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
Tel. 615-322-2461